

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SAIGON 03326 230915Z

15

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
----- 065493

P R 230545Z MAR 75  
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3995  
INFO USDEL JEC PARIS  
CINCPAC HONOLULU  
COMIPAC HONOLULU  
COMUSSAG NKP THAILAND

S E C R E T SAIGON 3326

EXDIS - MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

NOFORN

FOLLOWING MSG SENT ACTION SAIGON 22 MARCH 1975  
BEING REPEATED TO YOU  
QUOTE  
S E C R E T DANANG 0283

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, MILI, VS  
SUBJ: VIEWS OF BISHOP OF DANANG

1. BISHOP OF DANANG PHAM NGOC CHI MET WITH CONGEN POLOFF  
MARCH 21. THE BISHOP SAID THAT HE THOUGHT PRESIDENT THIEU'S  
MARCH 20 SPEECH HAS REASSURED THE PEOPLE A LITTLE BIT, IF,  
INDEED, THE PRESIDENT COULD FULFILL HIS PROMISES. HE SAID THAT  
HE HAD MET THE PRESIDENT IN SAIGON ON MARCH 20 JUST BEFORE  
HE MADE HIS SPEECH AND THE PRESIDENT HAD ASSURED HIM THAT HE  
WOULD DO HIS BEST TO DEFEND THE CITY OF HUE AND, IF THAT NO  
LONGER BECAME POSSIBLE, TO WITHDRAW TROOPS FROM HUE TO DEFEND  
DANANG. THE BISHOP, HOWEVER, EXPRESSED GRAVE DOUBT THAT TROOPS

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IN MR-1 WERE SUFFICIENT TO MAINTAIN THE COMMITMENTS THAT THE

PRESIDENT GAVE. CHI WONDERED IF ADDITIONAL MILITARY AID WERE BEING GIVEN IN A MANNER NOT KNOWN TO HIM, OR IF THERE WERE NOT SOME NEGOTIATIONS IN PROGRESS AMONG THE GREAT POWERS TO STOP THE ATTACKS.

2. BISHOP CHI SAID THE PEOPLE DID NOT BLAME THIEU FOR THE COUNTRY'S PLIGHT BUT INSTEAD THEY BLAMED THE AMERICANS WHO ENTERED INTO A "MOST SOLEMN AGREEMENT" TO SUPPORT VIET NAM WITH AT LEAST ONE-TO-ONE REPLACEMENT OF MILITARY SUPPLIES, AN AGREEMENT WHICH THE AMERICANS HAD NOT KEPT. THE ARVN HAD FOUGHT VERY WELL, HE SAID, BUT NOW THEY WERE LIKE A CAR WITHOUT FUEL. HE SAID THAT THE ENTIRE PEOPLE AT LARGE "CURSED THE AMERICANS" FOR THEIR BETRAYAL OF VIET NAM.

3. BISHOP CHI SAID THAT HE INTENDED TO REMAIN IN DANANG COME WHAT MAY, AND THAT BISHOP NGUYEN KIM DIEN HAD RETURNED TO HUE. CHI THOUGHT THAT ALL THE BISHOPS WOULD STAY IN THEIR DIOCESES.

4. CHI, A "FIGHTING PRIEST" WHO ONCE COMMANDED BATTALIONS IN NORTH VIET NAM AND THEN LED HIS FLOCK SOUTH IN 1954, BETRAYED HIS EMOTION THROUGHOUT THE CONVERSATION BOTH IN HIS MANNER OF SPEECH AND BY THE TEARS IN HIS EYES.

FRANCIS  
UNQUOTE  
LEHMANN

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

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